

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A face ~~Face~~ detection apparatus in which an image region of a test image is compared with data indicative of the presence of a face, ~~[[;]]~~ the apparatus comprising:

a pre-processor configured ~~operable~~ to identify low-difference regions of the test image where there exists less than a threshold image difference across groups of pixels within those regions; and

a face detector configured ~~operable~~ to perform face detection on regions of the test image other than those identified by the pre-processor as low-difference regions.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the region is a rectangular region, and ~~[[;]]~~ the pre-processor is configured ~~operating~~ to identify low-difference regions only with respect to pixels in a central portion of the regions.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 2, wherein ~~in which~~ the central portion of a region comprises all of the region except for two strips, one at each side of the region.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the pre-processor is configured ~~operable~~ to identify high-difference regions of the test image where there exists greater than a threshold image difference across groups of pixels within those regions, ~~[[;]]~~ and the ~~[[a]]~~ face detector is configured ~~operable~~ to

perform face detection on regions of the test image other than those identified by the pre-processor as low-difference regions or high-difference regions.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the face detector is configured ~~operable~~:

- to derive a set of attributes from respective blocks of a region;
- to compare the derived attributes with attributes indicative of the presence of a face;
- to derive a probability of the presence of a face by a similarity between the derived attributes and the attributes indicative of the presence of a face; and
- to compare the probability with a threshold probability.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 5, wherein ~~in which~~ the attributes comprise the projections of image areas onto one or more image eigenvectors.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The face detection apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ according to claim 1, wherein ~~in which~~ the groups of pixels comprise pairs of adjacent pixels.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A video ~~Video~~ conferencing apparatus comprising the face detection apparatus according to claim 1.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A surveillance ~~Surveillance~~ apparatus comprising the face detection apparatus according to claim 1.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A method of face detection, in which an image region of a test image is compared with data indicative of the presence of a face₁[[;]] the method comprising the steps of:

identifying low-difference regions of the test image where there exists less than a threshold image difference across groups of pixels within those regions; and

performing face detection on regions of the test image other than those identified by the pre-processor as low-difference regions.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A tangible computer readable medium including computer executable instructions, wherein the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the ~~Computer software having program code for carrying out~~ a method according to claim 10.

Claims 12-14 (Canceled).